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NORTH CAROLINA GIRL DURING
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THE NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION

Copy of a genuine letter
written by a North Carolina girl
during Sherman's raid.

By

Miss Nellie North
now Mrs. Geo. French
Wilmington
N.C.



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Glen Burnie, March 21, 1865.

My Dear Cousin,

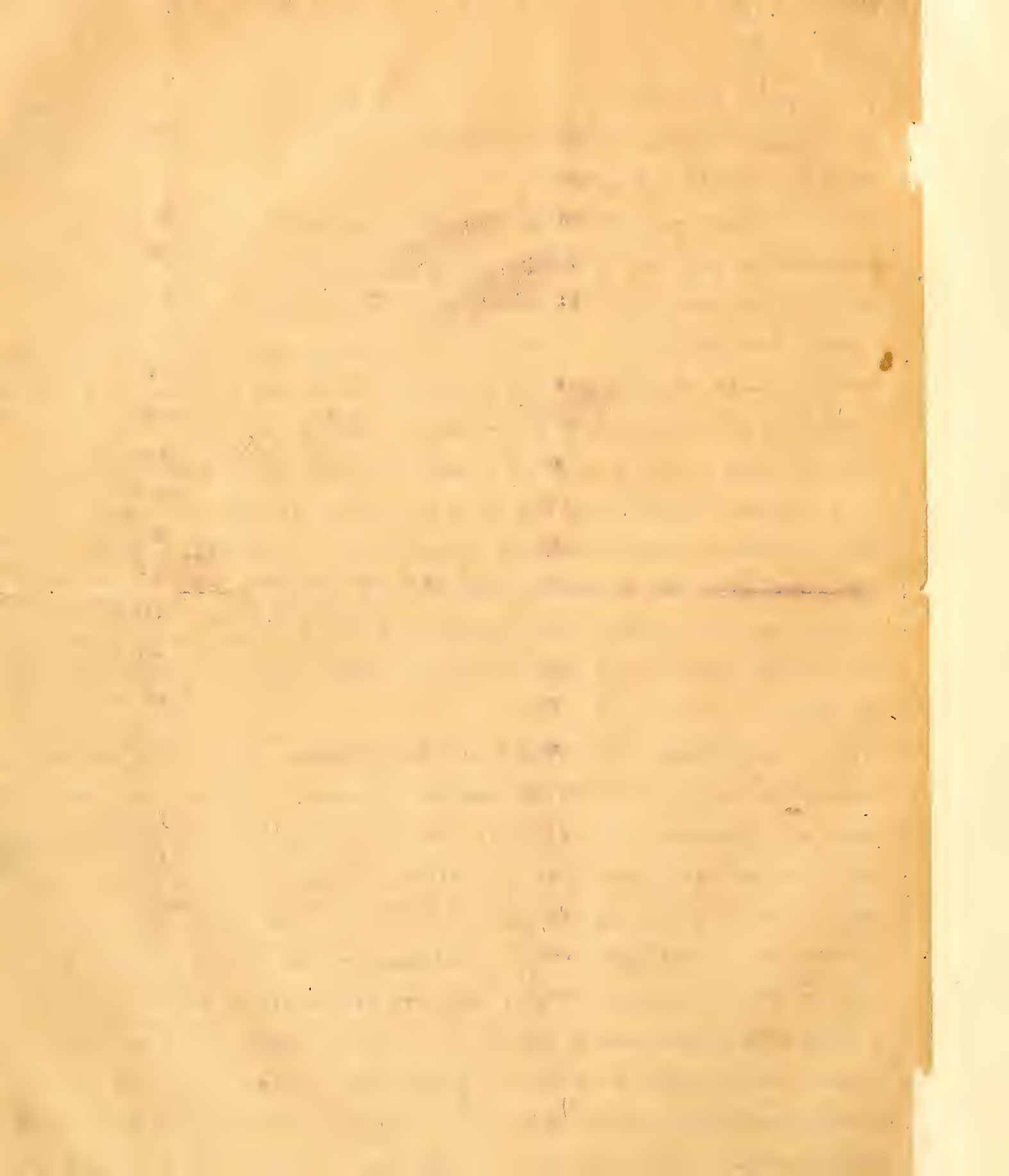
Well Pattie, I have seen the Yankees at last, and I earnestly pray heaven that I may never see them again. The 9th. of March will ever be remembered by me. The vagabonds appeared here early on that morning, we had no idea they were within fifty miles of here, it seemed that day that heaven had forever turned from us. There was a hundred and fifty men in the first squad that came here, and such a yell as they gave when they rode in the gate, mortal never heard. I was not frightened one bit, it seemed as though my very soul had turned to stone and I knew felt nor cared for anything.

Papa ran to the swamp as soon as he saw them coming, and they were almost frantic with rage when they found he had left and started in the woods to find him and swore by all the saints in heaven that they would kill him if they found him. You can imagine what agony we suffered on his and Willie's account who was with him. The rascals all came in, and in less than ten minutes the house was stripped of almost every thing. Pa had the night before fortunately concealed his two watches and your jewelry in a very nice place, somewhere about the house, I did not know where, and the Yankees of course concluded as there was so much in the house there must be some watches too. One of them came to me to know where they were, I of course refused to tell, he then immediately presented a pistol to my head and swore he would take my life if I did not tell him, but I was as firm as a rock and though I was completely in his power, I defied him to touch me, finding at last

that twas utterly useless to try to get anything out of me, he went off swearing, " I was the d-----st rebel he had ever seen, which I considered was very much of a compliment.

There was no officer with the first men that came, and our drooping spirits were revived about one o'clock by the sight of a Yankie officer. He came in the house and introduced himself as Lt. Bracht, (queer name isn't it?) Mamma and I immediately appealed to him for protection and he soon had order restored in the house, and gave us a guard. I think he was very much of a gentleman. He was very kind to me, that was something I did not expect, I did not think there was a gentleman in the whole Yankie Army, but now I know there is one if no more. He came too late to save any of our property that the Yankies wanted. They carried off every earthly thing we had to eat, did not leave a grain of corn or coffee, or anything that would sustain life one day, they found all our silver and took every knife, fork and spoon we had in the world.

25 thousand men passed here and I assure you I could not see across the road for three whole days for the men. They set the Pine Woods on fire all around us. Tell Aunt Jennie they set fire all the resin she saw, and turned day into night. I hope to gracious Pat, that you may never go through all the agony I did in that one week. They carried off a great many of our clothes, have not left me a cloak or shawl of any kind, tore the silk you gave Jennie all to flinders and carries off my best dresses and two of Mamma's silks. Have not one blanket in the house, have only a half dozen quilts. Every one of our darkies went and Ma and I have had to do all of the washing and ironing and scouring. I have done all the cooking. The house is so dirty I don't think we will get it clean in ten months. The Yankies burned our barn

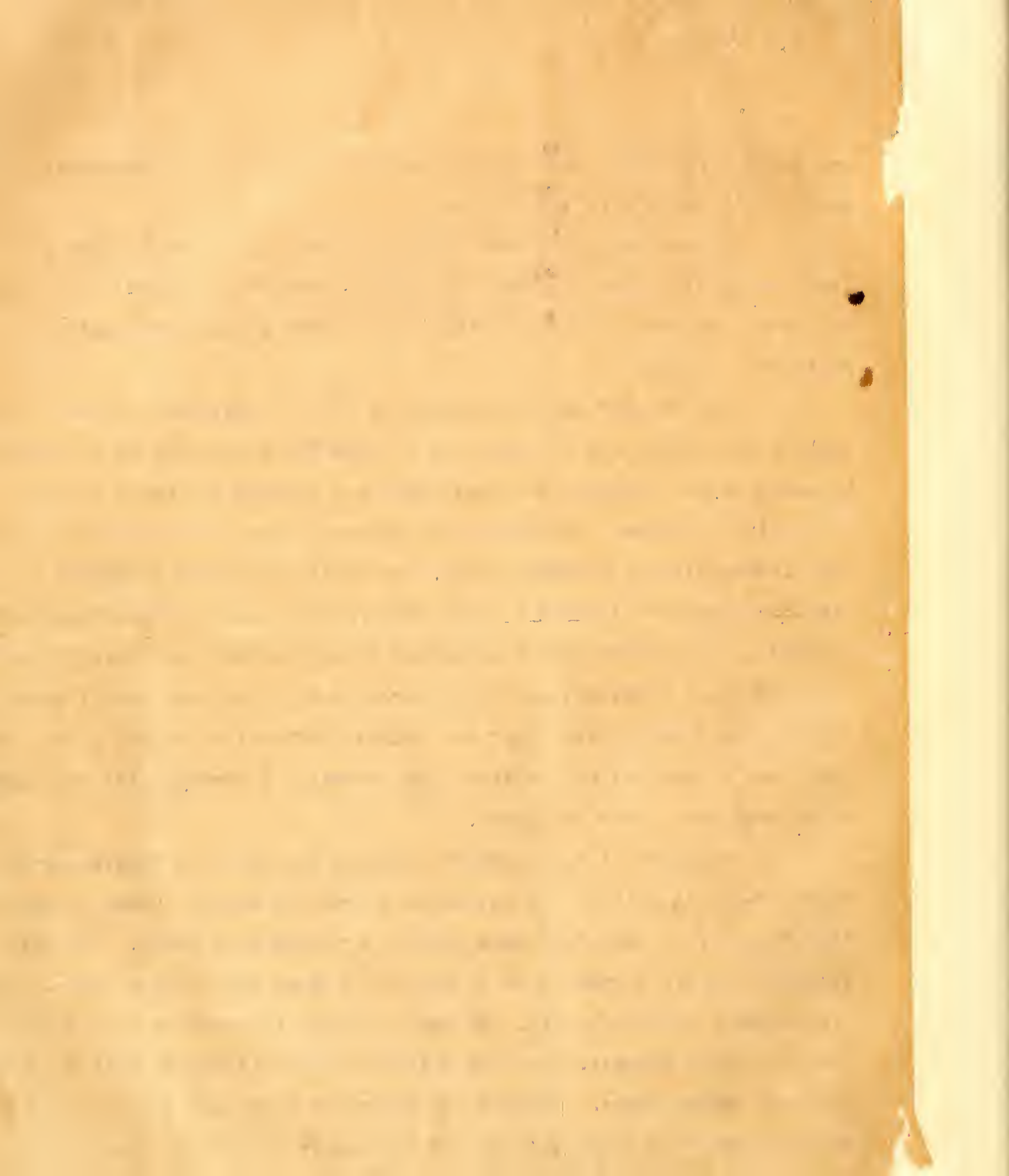


and swore they would burn the house over our heads, but Providence saved it, I can't tell you now how.

We have not heard from Archie in more than a month, have an idea he is with the Boys Army. The 14th. Yankee Army Corps, one that was here, has been cut all to pieces so I hear, I hope they will not spare one of them.

The "Yanks" were just about to find the watches, and Mama took them to Lt. Bracht and he took care of them for us as long as he stayed, he was here all Thursday and that night and guarded the house for us. I sat up in the parlor and played on the piano, and sang for the Yankees till twelve o'clock Thursday night. The first that came compelled me to play for them, but I vowed I would play nothing but Southern songs and I know you would have been surprised if you could have looked in and seen how coolly I was sitting there surrounded by my most deadly enemies, singing the "Bonnie Blue Flag" and "Dixie" with all my might, I am confident that I never in all my life sang so well. I breathed all the fire in my soul into those two songs.

Well Pat, I must close by telling you that the Yankees never caught Papa and that we are not quite starved to death, though we came very near it, we went five days without a mouthful of bread. You will excuse the paper I know as it is all the Yankees left in the house, and tis a wonder they left this. Oh how I do hate the very name of Yankee! They can never prosper. May the chilling blight of heaven fall on their dark and doomed souls. May all the powers of earth and heaven combine to destroy them, may their land be one vast scene of ruin and desolation



44.
as ours is. This is the blessing of the innocent and injured one, I
forgive them? May heaven never.

Tell Mary not to be uneasy about us, we will try to keep from
starving. I heard from Uncle Archie's folks and they are well. Write
soon, and don't for mercy's sake let anyone see this horribly written
letter.

Hellie

March 21st, 1865.

